

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 AGR-20 SWF-02 FEA-02

CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-03 H-03 INR-11

INT-08 L-03 LAB-06 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 AID-20

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INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EAGR

SUBJECT: EC BAN ON BEEF IMPORTS

REF: STATE 156173

1. ON JULY 19 EMBASSY DELIVERED COPIES DEPARTMENT'S PRESS
STATEMENT ON EC BEEF IMPORT BAN TO OFFICIALS CONCERNED
IN MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND AGRICULTURE.

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2. AGATT TODAY DISCUSSED IMPORT BAN WITH DEBRUYCKER, AGRMINISTRY

CHEF DE CABINET, MAKING POINTS IN REFTEL. DEBRUYCKER SAID APPRECIATED U.S. POSITION AND CONSTERNATION BEEF SUPPLYING COUNTRIES BUT FELT BEEF IMPORT BAN FULLY JUSTIFIED FROM EC POINT OF VIEW AND LONG OVERDUE. BELGIAN AGRICULTURAL OFFICIALS BEGAN DISCUSSING NEED REDUCE IMPORTS LAST NOVEMBER AND IN JANUARY REQUESTED EC RECONSIDER EITHER BANNING OR SHARPLY REDUCING IMPORTS.

3. SAID REQUEST BASED ON FOLLOWING ANALYSIS: (A)EC IMPORTED 900,000 M.T. BEEF IN 1973; (B) IN 1974 EC CATTLE NUMBERS UP NINE PERCENT; (C) THIS RESULTED IN SURPLUS PRODUCTION OF 800,000 M.T. WHICH ELEMENATED NEED FOR IMPORTS; (D) CONSUMPTION DOWN CONSIDERABLEY BUT BY UNKNOWN QUANTITY. SITUATION MADE WORSE BY ITALIAN BEEF IMPORT RESTRICTIONS AND MEASURES TAKEN TO REDUCE CONSUMPRION (INCREASE IN VAT FROM 6 TO 18 PERCENT,HIGHER BEEF PRICES RESULTING FROM CATTLE PRICE INCREASE TO FARMERS TO STIMULATE ITALIAN PRODUCTION). SAID EC BEEF IMPORTS 264,000 M.T. SO FAR IN 1974 WHICH EXACERBATED SURPLUS SUPPLY.

4. DEBRUYCKER SAID THAT IF IMPORT BAN HAD BEEN IMPOSED IN JANUARY OR SOONER SURPLUS PROBLEM MIGHT HACE BEEN SOLVED BY NOW. HOWEVER, IT NOW APPEARS BAN WILL BE NECESSARY BEYOND NOVEMBER. HE THINKS IT WILL BE LATTER PART 1975 BEFORE SURPLUS PROBLEM SOLVED AND CATTLE PRICES RISE.

5. NEVERTHELESS, BELGIAN GOVERNMENT NOT HAPPY WITH BEEF BAN DECISIION ATH THIS TIME DUE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS.

6. IN ADDITION OTHER SURPLUS MEASURES, \$6 MILLION CONSUMER PROMOTION PROGRAM WILL START IN SPTEMBER, HALF FINANCED BY EC AND HALF BY MEMBER COUNTRIES. IN BELGIUM WILL EMPHASIZE WAYS PREPARING LOWER-PRICED BEEF CUTS SINCE MAIN DEMAND NOW FOR "NOBLE" STEAK CUTS WHICH COOK QUICKLY.

7. DEBRUYCKER SAID HOG PRICES DOWN 40 PERCENT FROM HIGH AND FARMERS LOSING 25 TO 30 DOLLARS A HEAD. HOWEVER,GOB POLICY NOT REQUEST ANY 3: ACTION SINCE HOG PRODUCTION CAN BE MORE QUICKLY ADJUSTED TO DEMAND. ALSO, SINCE CONSIDER DUTCH AND BELGIANS MORE EFFICIENT PRODUCERS,EXPECT ADJUSTMENT BE MAD MAINLY IN FRENCH OUTPUT.RENNER
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